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Digital divide reduced...

economic power in the world because every sector is working in cohesion. By engaging people from all sectors and encouraging them to work together, we can trigger positive spillover of ideas in universities, he added.

When more and more people from diverse fields share a common vision of future, the stronger will be our resolve for strengthening the education system, nation building and solving social issues, the Lt Governor asserted.

The Lt Governor spoke on the efforts of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in overhauling the education system through National Education Policy for promoting student engagement, innovation, incubation, curiosity and developing an ecosystem where knowledge society and economic growth can complement each other.

The Lt Governor also mentioned about the youth of J&K who are making significant contributions to policy initiatives and implementation of UT Government's several flagship schemes and initiatives focusing on scaling Women Entrepreneurship, tangible & intangible Heritage Conservation, Film Policy, Jammu and Srinagar Smart City Projects driving urban transformation and various other priority sectors. The Lt Governor interacted with the faculty members and students and urged them to follow the values and ideology of Mahatma Gandhi and work for the public welfare and upliftment of the society. He also appreciated the endeavors of the Central University of Gujarat in encouraging the students to contribute towards nation-building. Prof. Rama Shankar Dubey, Vice Chancellor of Central University of Gujarat, while speaking on the occasion, threw light on the life of Mahatma Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Deans, Heads of Departments, faculty members and students in large number were present on the occasion.

J&K Commission for...

"Kashmir Commission for Protection of Child Rights," reads an order issued by Dr Piyush Singh, Secretary, General Administration Department.

As per order, the committee will be headed Chief Secretary, J&K as its Chairperson while Administrative Secretary, Social Welfare Department and Secretary, Department of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs will be its Members.

"The committee shall ensure that the procedure prescribed in Jammu and Kashmir Child Rights Commission Rules, 2022 is followed while making selection of the Chairperson and Member of the Child Rights Commission and also to prepare a select list and submit recommendations to the Government for appointment of Chairperson and Members of the aforesaid Commission," the order stated and added, "the committee shall prepare a wait list of two persons for each of the posts which shall be valid for a period of three months."

Two JKAS officers...

the GAD, has been posted as Executive Director, J&K Entrepreneurship Development Institute and Anju Gupta, JKAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the GAD, has been posted as Regional Director, Survey and Land Records (ex-officio Settlement Officer), Jammu.

2 civilians killed...

Surinder Kumar, both in their late 30s, were killed and Anil Kumar from Uttarakhand was injured, police said.

Following the incident, locals, carrying their bodies, blocked the Jammu-Poonch national highway for nearly seven hours and demanded a probe into the matter and adequate compensation to the families of the victims.

They relented only after senior administration, army and police officials assured them of action, including registration of FIR.

The bodies were taken to the Rajouri Government Medical College for postmortem and other legal formalities, Mughal said.

Police said the firing took place around 6.15 am when a group of people, who worked as porters, were approaching the 'alpha' gate of the camp, located along the highway and about 150 km from Jammu.

Though the army claimed that "unidentified terrorists" started firing at the camp and in retaliatory fire, the two people were killed, eyewitnesses, denied it and alleged unprovoked firing by the sentry.

Locals raised doubts over the army's statement as they saw no standard operating procedures being followed -- cordoning off the area and calling of a quick reaction team.

Rajouri Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal, Deputy General Officer Commanding (GOC) 25-Infantry Division Brigadier S Malik and DIG Mughal, along with other officials, pacified the protesters, who burnt tyres to block the highway and also threw stones at the camp.

While Kundal assured the demonstrators of a magisterial probe, Malik said the army will extend full support in the investigation.

"Senior district administration officials were on the ground to persuade the protesters and stop the violence. Forensic and ballistic tests, and spot inspection will be done as part of the investigation, the report of which will be shared later," Mughal said.

Besides assuring a magisterial probe into the incident, the deputy commissioner also said ex-gratia relief, according to norms, will be given to the kin of the deceased.

"Demand for employment to the kin of the deceased will be looked into," Kundal was heard telling the protesters.

Brigadier Malik termed the incident "very unfortunate" and said those found guilty will be punished according to the law.

"The army will extend full support to police and in material probes. As far as compensation to the victims' families is concerned, we will help them as the army is here to help and protect the people," Malik told the protesters.

Officials said though the highway was reopened, the situation in the town remains tense but under control.

Earlier in the day, the army's White Knight Corps, in a tweet from its official handle,

said "In an early morning firing incident by unidentified terrorists at Rajouri near Military Hospital, there has been fatal casualty of two individuals. The police, security forces and civil administration officials are on the site."

BJP Jammu and Kashmir president Ravinder Raina said he will take up the issue with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and assured the victims' families of a fair investigation in the incident.

"It is a grave incident and I have talked to the concerned army, police and civil officers who assured that it will be investigated and the guilty will be punished," he said.

Visa fraud: CBI...

France here. The duo allegedly destroyed documents and files from the visa department to leave no traces of this illicit activity, the officials said.

"During five months, several files were allegedly handled by these accused which mostly pertain to individuals that are young farmers or unemployed people from Punjab who had not earlier travelled. It was further alleged that during the said period, the accused had perpetrated the fraud of huge amount in the visa department of the embassy," the spokesperson said.

The officials said others booked in the FIR, include Navjot Singh, Chetan Sharma, Satwinder Singh Purewal and Manpreet Singh.

"Searches are being conducted today at six locations including Delhi, Patiala, Gurdaspur and Jammu, at the premises of the accused. Incriminating documents/articles, including laptops, mobile phones, suspicious passports etc. have so far been recovered," the spokesperson said.

JKSSB recruitment process...

but restrained the SSB from declaring the results till its final judgement.

"The matter is sub-judge," Sharma said in response to a question about the hiring of Aptech, a company which was blacklisted in 2019, for the conduct of the examination.

However, he said the company was hired as per government guidelines as it has already completed the blacklisting period of three years in May this year.

"When we are selecting a company for conducting a written examination, we also employ checks and balances on our side to ensure transparency, accountability and fairness in the selection. We are following the procedure which is matching the standards of major national level recruitment agencies in the country," he said.

Sharma said the SSB, for the first time, introduced a third-party audit by Ernst and Young LLP to review the processes before the exam, during and after the same, besides installing low-frequency jammers at designated centres after getting required permissions to render electronic gadgets useless.

"OMR (Optical mark recognition) was replaced by computer-based test (CBT). The centres where there was even an iota of doubt regarding credibility were cancelled in consultation with the district administration and the investigating agencies," he said.

Besides the SSB, the district administration and the General Administration Department (GAD) have deployed experts and observers at the centres, while the police have put in place strict frisking, Sharma said.

In addition to regular staff, he said the board has also deployed one member to coordinate with other departments to avoid any confusion and promptly address the issues, if any, being faced by candidates.

He said technical experts from the information technology department were made part of flying squads, which were deployed in both Srinagar and Jammu for random inspection, while senior officers of the board were divided into teams to conduct surprise visits to each centre.

"All these steps have been taken to ensure transparency, accountability and fair selection, besides restoring the confidence of job aspirants in the system. It is a matter of satisfaction that some of the candidates who have moved the court have also appeared for the SI examination as per their scheduled date," Sharma said.

He said bringing reforms with changing times is imperative as "we have to remain two steps ahead of conspirators trying to undermine the system for their self-interest, without caring for the hard work of the students".

Two sisters held...

executive magistrate," the official said.

He said further investigation is going on and more arrests cannot be ruled out.

According to sources, the school-going girls have their residence ahead of the LoC fence and a Pakistani handler, Ashaiq used to hand over the narcotics to them.

A number of Indian habitations are located ahead of the India-Pakistan LoC fence, also known as the anti-infiltration obstacle system (AIOS), in Jammu and Kashmir. The intelligence agencies have reported that Pakistanis living on the other side "frequently" visit the houses here to push drugs and weapons and to gather inputs about Indian security forces deployed to guard the front, prone to infiltration of terrorists.

Former ADGP, VC...

administrator: Democratic Azad Party Chief & Former Chief Minister Ghulam Nabi Azad expressed grief over the demise of Masud Ahmed Chaudhary and termed it as a big loss to the Gujjar community. Masud Sahib, the DAP chief said, was an outstanding personality who made contributions in every sphere of life and worked tirelessly for his community till his last breath. "I knew Dr Masud sahib personally and I was much aware of his efforts in uplifting his deprived community through the means of education.

He was a cop with a human heart, an educationist with inclusive vision," Azad said. "Whenever we spoke to each other, I could sense his concerns, emotions and the love for his community. He wanted his community to grow and prosper," he recalls Chaudhary's conversations. Azad said that as the founding vice chancellor of BGSB University, Chaudhary sahib left achievable marks behind and "today when we are proud of the BGSB University, we shall equally remember the tireless efforts of its founding VC." DAP chief termed Chaudhary as the beacon of light for the tribal community. Azad said that he made people of his community aware of their rights, and encouraged them to pursue education.

"To support and encourage his community members, he set up Gujjar Desh education

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Power Shutdown

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Chief Engineer (Distribution) JPDCL Jammu has informed that the power supply to Jourian, Troti, Muthi, Mara, Bakore, Rakhi Muthi, PHE, BSF, Border Migrant, Sohal and adjoining areas shall remain affected on December 17 from 9 am to 3 pm.

Similarly, the power supply to Medical, Chatha, Satwari, Toph, Shakti Nagar, Co-Bagh, Canal, Gho Manhasa, Marh, Gajansoo, Vijay Nagar, Sain Mohalla, Indra Colony, Bhagwati Nagar, Agriculture Complex, Baba Sehaj Nath Part of Patel Nagar, Part of Puran Nagar, Kheriyani, Sari Raipur, Sari Jagin part of Sari Kashmiri, Mohalla Trilokpur near Exchange SRORAS, DRDO Hospital, Akalpur, Udheywala, Sangrampur, Late-De-Bagh, Nagbani, DPS School Manorama Vihar, Adheywala, Anand Nagar, Domana, Lower Machliyan, Nagbani, Katra, Rajouri, Draba, Jourian, Barn, Pooneh, Reasi and part of District Jammu shall remain affected on December 17 from 9 am to 1 pm. Likewise, the power supply to SMVDU University Campus shall remain affected on December 17 from 10 am to 4 pm. Meanwhile, Superintending Engineer (Distribution), JPDCL, O&M Circle, Kathua has informed that the power supply to PHE, BSF, Penth, Thalote and adjoining areas shall remain affected on December 17 from 8 am to 12 noon.

Awareness rally on road safety organised by MIER College

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: A public awareness rally for road safety was organized by the Extension Unit of MIER College of Education on the theme "Use of Helmet and Seat Belt."

The rally was flagged-off by the HODs of the UG & PG departments in which students carried placards and banners appealing to the people to follow traffic rules, avoid accidents, wear helmets, avoid jumping signals and over speeding etc.

The rally started from the college campus and proceeded towards Indira Chowk, passed through General Bus Stand, and concluded at the college.

The students made

bystanders aware that wearing a seat belt in a car or putting on a helmet while driving a two-wheeler can save lives in accidents and crashes. A team of 24 students, along with the Incharge, Suman Devi and member, Nandini Puri Extension Unit, conducted the rally.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Adit Gupta, Principal MIER College, said that the aim of organising the rally is to spread awareness about traffic rules and the importance of following rules in day-to-day lives.

He urged students to act as ambassadors of road safety and help in creating awareness regarding strict adherence to road safety rules.

trust in Jammu through which he supported under-privileged people to pursue their dreams and aspirations," he said.

Former J and K chief ministers Farooq Abdullah, Omar Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti and Ghulam Nabi Azad joined people from all walks of life to express their condolences to the deceased.

The Jammu and Kashmir Congress and the Apni party also expressed grief over the passing away of Choudhary.

Senior BJP leader Devender Singh Rana visited the residence of the deceased to convey his condolences to the bereaved family.

Vice Chancellor of BGSB University Prof Akbar Masood chaired a condolence meeting at the university on the death of Choudhary and declared three-day mourning on the campus. The university is located in Rajouri district.

Thousands of people attended the funeral prayers of Choudhary who was laid to rest at Gujjar Colony graveyard here. A police contingent also presented a guard of honour as a tribute to him.

Tribal research and cultural foundation headed by noted tribal researcher Javaid Rahi also paid rich tributes to Choudhary and said he has done unparalleled work for the upliftment and betterment of Gujjar and Bakerwal communities.

National Conference president Farooq Abdullah and vice president Omar Abdullah prayed for peace to the departed soul and expressed solidarity with the bereaved family.

In her condolence message, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said, "I am personally grieved by Dr Choudhary's demise. His death leaves behind a void that's difficult to fill."

She said Choudhary was widely known as 'Sir Syed of Gujjar Community' for his untiring efforts in areas of social and educational awakening of the tribals. Institutions patronised by him will continue to uplift the tribal community even after his demise, she added.

1971 war was...

Bangladesh. "On Vijay Divas, join the nation in saluting our brave Indian Armed Forces whose valour led to a decisive victory in the 1971 war. We will always be grateful for their service and sacrifices," Jaishankar tweeted.

Every year, India celebrates December 16 as Vijay Diwas to remember its historic victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war.

Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande hosted an 'At Home' event on Thursday on the eve of the Vijay Diwas which was attended by President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi among others.

Four-member DLSCs...

Deputy Commissioner (concerned) as its Chairperson while Superintendent of Police, representative of the concerned Department and representative of Director Litigation will be its Members.

"The Committee shall finalize the draft objections to be submitted by the concerned Officer Incharge Litigation within a period of 15 days within receipt of the draft objections by the concerned Department," it stated and added, "The draft objections so finalized shall be thereafter submitted to the appropriate office within a period of 15 days thereof."

The order further stated that the Deputy Commissioner shall take periodic review of all pending cases, on monthly basis, preferably on second Monday to expedite the draft objections. It is further ordered that Deputy Commissioner shall nominate senior-most officer of the concerned Department as Officer-In-Charge for each case.

Srinagar records season's...

the coldest recorded place in the Valley at minus 5.3 degrees Celsius.

The Gulmarg skiing resort recorded a slightly warmer night at minus 2.5 degrees Celsius, the officials added. The meteorological department has forecast generally dry weather over the next five days.

CUET 2023 to...

"The schedule for all crucial exams has been announced this year in advance," a senior NTA official added.

On Thursday, the agency said engineering entrance exam JEE-Main would be conducted from January 24 to 31, except on Republic Day. The second session of the exam will be held in April and applications for the exam will be accepted from December 15 to January 12, it added.

Jamia Masjid Srinagar...